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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/817,597	03/26/2001	Motoki Nakade	450100-03084	7826

20999 7590 02/02/2005

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EXAMINER

FISCHER, ANDREW J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3627

DATE MAILED: 02/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/817,597

Applicant(s)

NAKADE ET AL.

Examiner

Andrew J. Fischer

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The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 December 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 23-34 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 C.F.R. §1.114

1. A request for continued examination ("RCE") under 37 C.F.R. §1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(e), was filed in this on December 6, 2004. This application was under a final rejection (the First Final Office Action, mailed October 6, 2004) and is therefore eligible for continued examination under 37 C.F.R. §1.114. Because the fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. §1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality in the previous First Final Office Action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.114.

Acknowledgements

2. In accordance with the RCE noted above, Applicants' amendment filed November 15, 2004 is acknowledged. Accordingly, claims 34 remain pending.

3. All references in this Office Action to the capitalized versions of "Applicants" refers specifically the Applicants of record. References to lower case versions of "applicant" or "applicants" refers to any or all patent "applicants." Unless expressly noted otherwise, references to "Examiner" in this Office Action refers to the Examiner of record while reference to or use of the lower case version of "examiner" refers to examiner(s) generally.

4. This application in an image file wrapper ("IFW") application. Applicants' response is therefore separated before being placed into the IFW system (*i.e.* claims, remarks, drawings, etc. are separated and independently scanned). To ensure proper handling by the Examiner, the Examiner highly recommends Applicants place the application serial no (*e.g.* 06/123,456) in a

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header or footer (or other appropriate area) of *each* page submitted. At the very least, the Examiner highly recommends this practice for all pages listing the claims.

Restrictions

5. Restriction to one of the following inventions is usually required under 35 U.S.C. §121:

- I. Claims 1-13, drawn to a communication service method, classified in class 705, subclass 7.
- II. Claims 14-22, drawn to a communications service apparatus, classified in class 705, subclass 16.
- III. Claims 23-34, drawn to a communications service apparatus, classified in class 705, subclass 16.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

6. Inventions I and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case, Inventions I and II are not patentably distinct. Therefore a restriction between the two inventions is improper at this time. However, should Applicants amend either Invention such that the two inventions become patentably distinct, a restriction between Invention I and II will follow.

7. Inventions (I & II) and III are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case,

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neither Inventions I or II require a position designating means. Because of this, the inventions have at least different modes of operation.

8. During a telephone conversation with William Frommer on or about January 27, 2005 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-13. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 23-34 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

9. Applicants are reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 C.F.R. §1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 C.F.R. §1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 C.F.R. §1.17(i).

Specification

10. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. The claims are replete with these errors. See 37 C.F.R. §.75(d)(1), MPEP §608.01(o), and MPEP §2181. Correction of the following is required:

- a. The “means for transmitting audio signals” as recited in claim 1.
- b. The “means for transmitting audio data” as recited in claim 14.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112 1st Paragraph

11. The following is a quotation of the 1st paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112:

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The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

12. Claims 1-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 1st paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claims contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

13. In this case, Applicants have claimed embodiment(s) of the invention that are completely outside the scope of the specification. In particular, Applicants have not disclosed “said second image being offered directly by the arbitrary communications terminal apparatus utilized by said first user” If Applicants show that such features are found in embodiment(s) as disclosed in Applicants’ original specification or if Applicants expressly admit that such features are old and well known in this art and provide appropriate evidence in support thereof, this particular 35 U.S.C. §112, 1st paragraph rejection will be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §112 2nd Paragraph

14. The following is a quotation of the 2nd paragraph of 35 U.S.C. §112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

15. Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The claims are replete with errors. Some examples follow.

16. In claim 1, it is unclear what is the corresponding structure in the “means for transmitting audio signals”

17. In claim 1, the phrase “arbitrary selling goods” is indefinite.

18. In claim 14, it is unclear what is the corresponding structure in the “means for transmitting audio data”

19. Claims 17 is indefinite because the metes and bounds of the claim can not be determined. In particular, it is unclear if the phrase “said connecting means” in claim 17 is ‘in addition to,’ or ‘in replacement of,’ the phrase “the connection means” as recited in claim 14. The Examiner notes that the claims are replete with these types of errors.

20. In claim 18, “the selling goods” is indefinite because it is not known to what Applicants are referring to.

21. In claim 19, “said selling goods” is indefinite because it is not known to what Applicants are referring to.

22. Claim 22 is indefinite because it is unclear if Applicants are referring to the method steps in claim 1 or the apparatus. The Examiner notes that as currently claimed, claim 22 does not recite any additional method steps.

23. To help maintain compact prosecution, to avoid additional 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph rejections, and (if necessary) to aid Applicants in the event they appeal to the USPTO’s Board of Patent Appeals and Inferences, the Examiner recommends Applicants review their claims and for every means plus function or step plus function invoking 35 U.S.C. §112 6th paragraph and identified by Applicants, Applicants should indicate the claimed function in addition to expressly setting forth the corresponding structure, material, or acts of the particular claimed function by referring to the specification by page and line number and/or drawings with reference to particular characters noted therein. Applicants should consider this actual notice

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that such review and indication as described in this paragraph should be made prior to *any* amendment to the claims. However if Applicants have previously indicated the claimed function and the corresponding structure, material, or acts corresponding to that function, Applicants need only point out their response (with reasonable particularity) in which the indication was made.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §102

24. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. §102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office Action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States. . . .

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

25. Claims 14-21, as understood by the Examiner, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Burke et. al. (U.S. 6,134,223)(“Burke”). Burke discloses the claimed invention including combining images and data from various users and superposing them on another user’s computer or unit.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC §103

26. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. §103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office Action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

27. Claims 14-21, as understood by the Examiner, are alternatively rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Burke.¹ It is the Examiner's principle position that the claims are anticipated because of the inerencies noted above.

However if not inherent, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Burke to include the inherent features

28. Claims 1-13 and 22, as understood by the Examiner, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Burke. Because Invention I is not patentably distinct from Invention II, the patentability of Invention I stands or falls with the patentability of Invention II.

29. The Examiner concludes that Applicants have decided not to be their own lexicographer by indicating and defining claim limitations to have meanings other than their ordinary and accustomed meanings. To support this position, the Examiner relies on the following factual findings. First and as noted in the previous Office Action,² the Examiner has carefully reviewed the specification and prosecution history and can not locate any lexicographic definition(s). Second, the Examiner finds that not only have Applicants not pointed to definitional statements in their specification or prosecution history, Applicants have also not pointed to a term or terms

¹ See MPEP §2112 expressly authorizing alternative §102/§103 rejections when the question of inherency is present in the anticipation rejection.

² See the Examiner's previous Office Action mailed October 6, 2004, Paragraph No. 19.

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in a claim with which to draw in those statements³ with the required clarity, deliberateness, and precision.⁴ Third, after receiving express notice in the previous Office Action of the Examiner's position that lexicography is not invoked,⁵ Applicants have not pointed out the "supposed errors" in the Examiner's position regarding lexicography invocation in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) (*i.e.* Applicants have not argued lexicography is invoked). Finally and to be sure of Applicants' intent, the Examiner also notes that Applicants have declined the Examiner's express invitation⁶ to be their own lexicographer.⁷ Accordingly and for due process purposes, the Examiner gives notice that for the remainder of the examination process (and unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner), the heavy presumption in favor of the ordinary and accustomed meaning is not overcome; the claims therefore continue to be interpreted with their

³ "In order to overcome this heavy presumption in favor of the ordinary meaning of claim language, it is clear that a party wishing to use statements in the written description to confine or otherwise affect a patent's scope must, *at the very least*, point to a term or terms in the claim with which to draw in those statements. [Emphasis added.]" *Johnson Worldwide Assocs. v. Zebco Corp.*, 175 F.3d 985, 989, 50 USPQ2d 1607, 1610 (Fed. Cir. 1999).

⁴ "The patentee's lexicography must, of course, appear 'with reasonable clarity, deliberateness, and precision' before it can affect the claim." *Renishaw PLC v. Marposs Societa' per Azioni*, 158 F.3d 1243, 1249, 48 USPQ2d 1117, 1121 (Fed. Cir. 1998) citing *In re Paulsen*, 30 F.3d 1475, 1480, 31 USPQ2d 1671, 1674 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

⁵ See again the Examiner's previous Office Action, , Paragraph No. 19.

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ The Examiner's requirements on this matter were reasonable on at least two separate and independent grounds. First, the Examiner's requirements were simply an express request for clarification of how Applicants intend their claims to be interpreted so that lexicography (or even an *attempt* at lexicography) by Applicants was not inadvertently overlooked by the Examiner. Second, the requirements were reasonable in view of the USPTO's goals of compact prosecution, productivity with particular emphasis on reductions in both pendency and cycle time, and other goals as outlined in the USPTO's The 21st Century Strategic Plan, February 3,

“broadest reasonable interpretation” *In re Morris*, 127 F.3d 1048, 1054, 44 USPQ2d 1023, 1027 (Fed. Cir. 1997).⁸ The Examiner now relies heavily and extensively on this interpretation.⁹ Unless expressly noted otherwise by the Examiner, the preceding claim interpretation principles in this paragraph apply to all examined claims currently pending.

30. Under the broadest reasonable interpretation standard noted above and unless modified in this Office Action, the Examiner maintains his interpretations including the statements and/or definitions of claim limitations as noted in previous Office Action. Those previous definitions are part of the administrative record and, in accordance with *In re Morris*, are provided simply as a factual source to support the Examiner’s claim interpretations (and ultimately the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences claim interpretations if necessary¹⁰) during ex parte examination.

31. The Examiner maintains his position that claims 1-13 do not contain any product-by-process claims.

2003 available at www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/strat21/index.htm (last accessed January 30, 2005).

⁸ See also *In re Bass*, 314 F.3d 575, 577, 65 USPQ2d 1156, 1158 (Fed. Cir. 2002) (“In examining a patent claim, the PTO must apply the broadest reasonable meaning to the claim language, taking into account any definitions presented in the specification. Words in a claim are to be given their ordinary and accustomed meaning unless the inventor chose to be his own lexicographer in the specification”) (citations omitted); *In re Etter*, 756 F.2d 852, 858, 225 USPQ 1, 5 (Fed. Cir. 1985) (en banc); and MPEP §§ 2111 and 2111.01.

⁹ See 37 C.F.R. §1.104(c)(3) which states in part: “the examiner may rely upon admissions by applicant . . . as to *any matter* affecting patentability [Emphasis added.]”

¹⁰ See *Gechter v. Davidson*, 116 F.3d 1454, 1460, 43 USPQ2d 1030, 1035 (Fed. Cir. 1997) (“[W]e hold that the Board is required to set forth in its opinions specific findings of fact and conclusions of law adequate to form a basis for our review.”).

32. Regarding functional language, the Examiner maintains his position as noted in the previous Office Action.

Response to Arguments

33. Applicants' arguments with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Conclusion

34. References considered pertinent to Applicants' disclosure are listed on form PTO-892.

35. The following two (2) citations to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure ("MPEP") apply to this Office Action: MPEP citations to Chapters 100, 200, 500, 600, 700, 1000, 1100, 1300, 1400, 1500, 1700, 1800, 2000, 2100, 2200, 2500, 2600, and 2700 are from the MPEP 8th Edition, Rev. 2, May 2004. All remaining MPEP citations are from MPEP 8th Edition, August 2001.

36. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

37. Also in accordance with *In re Lee*, 277 F.3d 1338, 1344-45, 61 USPQ2d 1430, 1434-35 (Fed. Cir. 2002), the Examiner finds that the Borland's Paradox for Windows User's Guide is

additional evidence of what is basic knowledge or common sense to one of ordinary skill in this art. The reference is cited in its entirety. Paradox for Windows User's Guide exemplifies a typical relational database system. Because of the reference's basic content (which is self-evident upon examination of the reference) and after further review of the entire record including the prior art now of record in conjunction with the factors as discussed in MPEP §2141.03 (where practical), the Examiner finds that the Paradox for Windows User's Guide is primarily directed towards those of low skill in this art. Because the reference is directed towards those of low skill in this art, the Examiner finds that one of ordinary skill in this art must—at the very least—be aware of and understand the knowledge and information contained within the reference.

38. In accordance with the USPTO's goals of customer service, compact prosecution, and reduction of cycle time, the Examiner has made every effort to clarify his position regarding claim interpretation and any rejections or objections in this application. Furthermore, the Examiner has again provided Applicants with notice—for due process purposes—of his position regarding his factual determinations and legal conclusions. The Examiner notes and thanks Applicants for their "Remarks" (beginning on page 15) traversing the Examiner's positions on various points. If Applicants disagree with any additional factual determination or legal conclusion made by the Examiner in this Office Action whether expressly stated or implied,¹¹ the Examiner respectfully reminds Applicants to properly traverse the Examiner's position(s) in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.111(b) in their next properly filed response. By addressing these issues now, matters where the Examiner and Applicants agree can be eliminated allowing the

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Examiner and Applicants to focus on areas of disagreement (if any) with the goal towards allowance in the shortest possible time. If Applicants have any questions regarding the Examiner's positions or have other questions regarding this communication or even previous communications, Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Examiner Andrew J. Fischer whose telephone number is (703) 305-0292. If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's immediate supervisor, Robert Olszewski, can be reached at (703) 308-5183. The fax number for facsimile responses is now (703) 872-9306.

AJ Fischer 1/30/05

Andrew J. Fischer
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3627

AJF
January 30, 2005

¹¹ E.g., if the Examiner rejected a claim under §103 with two references, although not directly stated, it is the Examiner's implied position that the references are analogous art.